

General Joseph M. Street

William B. Street

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GENERAL JOSEPH M. STREET.

BY WILLIAM B. STREET.

Joseph Montfort Street was born in Lunenburg county, Virginia, December 18, 1782. His father, Anthony Street, was a planter; his mother, Mary Stokes, was the sister of Montfort Stokes, Governor of North Carolina; his grandfather, Captain John Street of Bristol, England, came to Virginia early in the eighteenth century. Anthony was the youngest of four sons; the family history says of him: "He volunteered as a private in the Continental Army and continued in the service of his country until the close of the war; was in the battles of Guilford Court House and King's Mountain, and at the close of the war was a Colonel commanding a regiment." Anthony Street succeeded to the office of Sheriff of Lunenburg county by seniority as magistrate. His family held the office for fifty years uninterruptedly. The family were Episcopalians. In Bishop Mead's "Notes on the Old Families of Virginia," he gives the names of several of the family who were vestrymen of St. Peter's church, Lunenburg.

Joseph was made Deputy Sheriff while in his teens; and the black buckskin knee breeches and long stockings, worn while "riding as Deputy," were long preserved as relics in the family. After this he was in a commercial

house in Richmond, Virginia. Leaving there, he went to Kentucky, read law in the office of Henry Clay, and practiced in the courts of Kentucky and Tennessee.

Later on, in company with John Wood, a Scotchman of some literary reputation, he began the publication of "The Western World," in Frankfort, Kentucky—a weekly paper, independent in politics. The style of the firm was—"J. M. Street & Co." In the paper he charged Aaron Burr with conspiracy against the government. Many persons in Kentucky had been induced to favor Burr's plans, some of them believing his proposed expedition was of a legitimate character, and sanctioned by the government. The paper met with violent opposition, and Burr's friends determined to silence it. Judge Innis sued the publishers for libel. The editors plead justification, and proved that the judge had transmitted sealed documents, received from Burr, to New Orleans. It may be that Innis did not know the character of the papers, for when their treasonable character was shown, he fainted, and was borne out of the court room. Others sought personal satisfaction. Many challenges were sent to which Street paid no attention further than to notice their receipt in the paper, with the remark that they were on file and the writers would be attended to. One of these persons took position in front of a hotel where Street was expected to pass. When he came, the man stepping before him, holding a copy of the paper in his hand, asked if he wrote the article pointed to. Street said, "I am responsible for all that appears in that paper." The man with an oath said, "he would cowhide the man who wrote it," and drew a whip from his sleeve. As he raised his arm Street, with a dextrous stroke of his cane, struck him on the point of his elbow; the whip dropped; the next stroke brought the man to the ground, and, before his friends could interfere, he had been punished so severely that he was confined to his bed for some time. At another time Burr's friends

undertook to drive Street from a ball room, when Colonel Thornton A. Posey of the army came to his assistance. They remained and successfully repelled the assault. Finally, George Adams a young lawyer, was selected to dispose of Street. He placed two strong men in an alley. As Street passed, they seized and held him until Adams advancing, pistol in hand, ordered the men to stand aside. He then shot, turned and ran. The ball struck a button and glanced from its direct course through the heart and broke the lower part of the breast bone. Street drew a dirk and pursued, striking—when in reach—so that Adams' coat was cut in ribbons from the collar to the skirt. Adams ran into a bank and closed the door. Street sat on the steps, too weak from loss of blood to stand. As persons gathered about, Adams came out of the back door and ordered them aside that he might finish him. Humphrey Marshall, who came up at that moment, wrested the pistol from Adams' hand. Street lay for months when each day was expected to be his last. He was so low when Burr's trial came on that he was unable to appear as a witness against him.

The foregoing details are deemed necessary on account of an erroneous statement in Mr. Adams' History of Jefferson's Second Administration (as quoted in *The Nation*, May 8, 1890). He says, "John Woods after thundering so loud in the pretended revelations he made in *The Western World*, was brought to say under oath, that he knew nothing which would amount to evidence." Street too—"the fighting editor of *The Western World*" as Mr. Adams describes him—"was similarly reticent as a witness."

Mr. Street married Eliza Maria, daughter of Major-General Thomas Posey of the Revolutionary Army, and giving up the law, engaged in mercantile pursuits. From Kentucky he went to Shawneetown in the Territory of Illinois, where he was clerk of the court for over sixteen

years. During this time he was postmaster and recorder of deeds. In 1827, he was appointed by President John Quincy Adams Agent for the Winnebagoes at Prairie du Chien. General Street's family have letters from Henry Clay, one dated December 17, 1806, written from Wheeling, Virginia, when on his way to Washington to take a seat in Congress; others dated in 1827, which relate to General Street's appointment. In one dated February 11, 1827, he says:

I received your letter of the 11th ult. communicating your wish to obtain some public employment. I assure you most sincerely that I have all the disposition to serve you which you could desire. With respect to past transactions to which you advert, I look upon them as matters long since gone by, and I have already given you evidence that they have left no unfriendly impression on my mind. [Referring to their relations during the trial of Burr.]

In another letter he conveys the intelligence that General Street has that day been appointed Agent for the Winnebagoes, and expresses the conviction that his appointment will be for the welfare of the Indians and the honor of the government. General Street entered upon the duties of Agent in November, 1827, and removed his family to Prairie du Chien in 1828. He found the people of the village outside of Ft. Crawford, with few exceptions, French and half-breed Indians.

The Winnebagoes were the only tribe whose Agent resided at Prairie Du Chien, although a band of Menominees, Chippewas, and Wabashaw's band of Yankton Sioux, were attached to that Agency. A portion of the Winnebagoes lived at the portage of the Wisconsin and Fox rivers, and had a sub-agent at Ft. Winnebago. The Winnebagoes had a bad reputation; they belonged to the "British band" during the war of 1812; were lazy, cruel and treacherous. Their former Agent, Nicholas Bolvin, an old Frenchman, was quite inefficient, being the tool of the traders. The Indians, spending much of their time in or near the village of Prairie du Chien, were becoming

demoralized by the use of bad whiskey, and bade fair soon to become extinct as a nation.

A short time before General Street went among them, "Red Bird," a chief, and two other Indians, in a drunken spree, went to the house of a man named Gagnier, near the village, and shot him and a man named Lipcap and scalped a little girl, leaving her for dead. She recovered, however, and years after when the writer saw her, there was a bare spot on her head from which the scalp had been cut and torn off. The Indians were tried and condemned to be hung. General Street investigated the case and concluded there were extenuating circumstances that would justify their pardon, and at his solicitation President Adams pardoned them, though Red Bird died while yet a prisoner. Their friends had prepared the grave clothes of white buckskin, with fringes of the same on the arms and down the legs. They presented these suits to General Street.

The Indians were controlled by the traders, whose avowed object it was to keep them as hunters and trappers. Joe Roulette, a Frenchman, agent of the American Fur Company, and H. L. Dousman, also French, his assistant, had been long with the Indians and allowed no one to interfere with their management of them. They met the new Agent cordially and proffered assistance in the performance of his official duty. He met them in like spirit and all went smoothly until the agent fully understood the situation. He had come among the Indians as their friend, to do them good; he would reclaim them from their savage life, and to do this must teach them the arts of civilization, educate and christianize them. The traders soon discovered that they could not use him, and, as he was gaining the confidence of the Indians, they used every means for his removal; but with General Wm. Clark as Superintendent at St. Louis and many friends at Washington, they could effect nothing while Mr. Adams was presi-

dent. When General Jackson was elected in 1828, and took his seat in 1829, they expected his early removal; but their efforts failing, they applied to General Lewis Cass, who, in an interview with the President asked for his removal, stating that he was a Whig. "Yes," said General Jackson, "I know General Street well; we rode upon the circuit in Kentucky and Tennessee together when we were young men. He is a Whig, but an honest man, and I shall keep him in office while I am President." General Jackson re-appointed him twice, and Mr. Van Buren once, in spite of the persistent efforts of the traders and their friends at Washington.

The Indians are often deceived by pretended friends, but are seldom mistaken in a true friend, and when found never desert or betray him. General Street gradually gained control of his own Indians, and the confidence of neighboring tribes. Providential circumstances contributed to fix firmly his influence over the Winnebagoes. One of the principal chiefs, Caramanee—the lame—in a drunken spree killed Green Corn, a young chief of influence. General Street sent for Caramanee, and had him pitch his camp in the Agency yard; he then sent for the family and friends of Green Corn, told them he knew that according to their customs Caramanee's life was forfeited, to be taken by the nearest of kin to the murdered man—if the deed was not covered by a ransom paid by the guilty man or his friends. He did not wish to interfere with their customs, but as they all knew, Caramanee was too poor to pay for the dead, but he as the next friend would pay for him. The Indians named a sum in tobacco and goods, which was paid, and Caramanee was free. General Street sent the interpreter to tell the old chief to wash the black paint from his face and come in. He then showed him the folly of his course, and concluded by saying if he would promise to drink no more whiskey he would be his friend, and would show him how he could save his people by

teaching them the arts of the white man. Caramanee was a good hearted, honest man, and seeing the Agent was his friend, made the promise which he only broke once. This was when General Street brought the whole tribe to Prairie du Chien and they pitched their camp near the Agency to prevent them from assisting Black Hawk and his followers, who were passing through the Winnebago country to escape the army. Some bad white men had induced Caramanee to drink. In his drunken condition he thought he must go to his friend; it was more instinct than reason. He picked up an old shot gun and went to the office of General Street, who was sitting at his desk. Caramanee stalked in, made a violent speech, spoke of his poverty, had no blanket or gun fit for a chief, broke the gun with his foot and threw the pieces out of the door; then stood erect and looked at General Street, who sat calmly in his chair. Their eyes met and the Agent motioned him to sit down; he shook his head, much like an enraged animal. Soon his limbs began to tremble and he sank to the floor, covering his face with his hands, the tears running down his cheeks. The interpreter was sent for. When he came the old chief seemed almost sober, sat, up and listened to a serious talk. The interpreter then took him home, and he was never drunk again.

By honest dealing with the Indians, and constant efforts for their good, together with his fearless course, he gained great influence over them and at the same time incurred the bitter hostility of the traders. He several times in the performance of duty came in conflict with the traders, who were so opposed to schools and farming among the Indians that he had to wait till 1832 before an opportunity offered. In 1829, a Mr. Whitney of Green Bay, with some Stockbridge Indians, went on the Winnebago lands to cut and carry off timber. General Street sent John Marsh with a request to Major Twiggs, commanding Ft. Winnebago, to furnish troops to remove

them, which was done. Whitney commenced suit against Street and Twiggs, and after causing them much annoyance in the courts, the case was dismissed. At Prairie du Chien the traders and settlers had been in the habit of going on the Indian land for timber. The Indians complained, and hearing that Jean Brunet was about twenty-five miles above Prairie du Chien, on the Mississippi, coming down with a quantity of pine logs and lumber, he applied to Major S. W. Kearney, then in command of Ft. Crawford, who sent a force, seized the logs and lumber and had it worked up in building Ft. Crawford. Brunet sued Major Kearney and General Street for trespass and false imprisonment; Henry Baird of Green Bay, Thomas P. Burnet of Prairie du Chien and Mr. Hempstead of Galena (afterwards Governor of Iowa), were attorneys for defence. The plaintiffs denied that defendants had any authority to seize the lumber, said Street did not have any order from the Indian Bureau, nor Major Kearney from the War Department, and that they did not show any law of the United States or Michigan. The defence argued that it was every one's business to know the law, and it was made the duty of these officers to prevent trespass on the Indians. In this case Judge James D. Doty decided that Street and Kearney must pay for the lumber, and issued an order to the Sheriff, in default of immediate payment to arrest the defendants and place them in jail until the same was paid. Eventually Congress passed a bill to relieve Street and Kearney, but the amount appropriated was only sufficient to pay judgment and costs. Street and Kearney had to pay their attorneys \$750. These facts are given to show the difficulties that General Street had to contend with in his endeavors conscientiously to discharge his duty, which was to prevent the Indians from doing anything that would disturb the peaceful relations between them and the whites, and to see that every stipulation on the part of the government was faithfully

carried out; and especially to protect the Indians in their persons and property against the encroachments of the whites, and at all times advise them for their best interests.

As was the custom in those days, General Street kept liquor in his house and set it out to his friends, but he could not do the same by the Indians when they came to to see him. He saw the inconsistency of this course and at once banished it from his home, quit the use of it, and never tasted liquor from that time. He saw that whiskey was the worst enemy the Indians had, and determined by precept and example to discourage the use of it.

The only religious organization at Prairie du Chien was a Roman Catholic Mission, the members of which were French and half-breeds, and there was no effort to teach the Indians. General Street started a prayer meeting in his own house on Sundays, at which he would read a sermon. These meetings were attended by the employees at the Agency and officers from the Fort. Among the latter were Major E. A. Hitchcock, Captain G. Loomis and Lieutenant Ogden.

During the Black Hawk war, 1832, General Street's control of the Indians of his Agency and his influence with all those within reach was clearly demonstrated. He moved the Indians from the Wisconsin river and sent them up the Mississippi; and, when the hostiles had crossed the Wisconsin and were making for the Mississippi, he brought his Indians to Prairie du Chien and camped them at the Agency. Part of Black Hawk's people came down the Wisconsin, intending to cross to the west bank of the Mississippi. General Street directed his Indians to bring them in. After the battle of Bad Ax and the return of the army to Rock Island, the Winnebagoes brought in Black Hawk and the Prophet, with about fifty prisoners, whom he delivered to Colonel Zachary Taylor, commanding Fort Crawford.

Soon after hostilities began, Henry Dodge of Mineral Point, Wisconsin, received permission to raise a volunteer mounted rifle company to act as scouts in the country through which the hostile Indians were expected to pass. William S. Hamilton (son of Alexander Hamilton) came to General Street with an order from General Atkinson, to raise a company of friendly Indians to act under General Dodge in protecting the white settlements. The company was raised, consisting of Winnebagoes, Sioux, and Menominees. The Sioux were from Wabashaw's village on Lake Pepin. General Street bought guns for their outfit on his own personal responsibility. Colonel Hamilton's receipt to him, as follows:

I, W. S. Hamilton, acting under orders from Brigadier-General H. Atkinson, to conduct to the army under his command such Indian forces as General Joseph M. Street, U. S. Indian Agent, shall raise and commit to my charge for that purpose, do certify that General Street assembled, in six days after my arrival at Prairie du Chien, warriors of the Sioux, Menominee, and Winnebago nations, who after an address from him expressed their anxiety to join the army acting against the Sac and Fox Indians, and were turned over to me for that purpose. I further certify that finding the Indians mostly unarmed and opposed to the use of muskets, in consequence of their weight, General Street procured and furnished North West guns and rifles of the kind generally used by the Indians, for arming the forces sent to General Atkinson; the greater part of the arms were delivered to me in boxes to be distributed to the unarmed Indians on the way, at my discretion.

WM. S. HAMILTON.

When Decorie and Chartiar (Winnebagoes), brought Black Hawk and the Prophet to General Street, Chartiar said:

My father I am young and I do not know how to make speeches;
 * * * * I am no chief; I am no orator, but I have been
 allowed to speak to you. Father, when you made the speech to the
 chiefs, Wau-Kon-Decorie, Caramanee, and One-eyed-Decorie, and
 others, I was there and heard you; I thought what you said to them
 you also said to me; you said if these two (pointing to Black Hawk and
 the Prophet) were taken by us and brought to you, there would never
 more a black cloud hang over your Winnebagoes; your words entered
 into my ear, my brain and my heart. I left here that same night. I have
 been a good way, and had much trouble,, but when I remembered your

words, I knew what you said was right; this made me continue, and do what you told me to do. Near the Dalles of the Wisconsin, I took Black Hawk, no one did it but me; I say this in the ears of all present, and I now appeal to the Great Spirit, our grand-father, and the earth, our grand-mother, for the truth of what I say. Father, I am no chief, but what I have done is for the benefit of my nation, and I hope to see the good that has been promised us. That one Wabokeshich (the prophet) is my relation; if he is to be hurt, I do not wish to see it. Father, soldiers sometimes stick the ends of their guns into the backs of Indian prisoners, when they are going about in the hands of the guards. I hope it will not be done to this man.

General Street replied:

My children you have done well; I told you to bring these men to me and you have done so; it is for your good; I am pleased at what you have done. I assured the great chief of the warriors (General Atkinson), that if these men were in your country, you would find them and bring them to me; and now I can say much for your good. I will go to Rock Island with the prisoners, and I wish you who have brought them, especially, to go with me, with such other chiefs and warriors as you may select. My children, the great chief of the warriors, when he left this place, directed me to deliver these and all other prisoners, to the chief of the warriors at this place, Colonel Zachary Taylor, who is here by me. Some of the Winnebagoes, south of the Wisconsin, have befriended the Sacs, and some of the Indians of my Agency have also given them aid; this displeases the great chief of the warriors, and your great father the President, and was calculated to do much harm. Your great father has sent a great war-chief from the east, General Scott, with a fresh army of soldiers. He is now at Rock Island; your great father has sent him and the Governor of Illinois to hold a council with the Indians; he has sent a speech to you, and wishes the chiefs and warriors of the Winnebagoes to go to Rock Island to the council on the 10th of next month. I wish you to be ready in three days, when I will go with you. I am well pleased that you have taken Black Hawk and the Prophet, and other prisoners; this will enable me to say much for you to the great chief of the warriors and to your great father. My children, I shall now deliver the two men, Black Hawk and the Prophet, to the chief of the warriors here. He will take care of them until we start to Rock Island.

Colonel Taylor upon taking charge of the prisoners made a few remarks to their captors. Soon after this, General Street, in an interview with General Winfield Scott, obtained permission for the Winnebagoes to attend the treaty with the Sacs and Foxes at Rock Island. He knew that if the traders suspected there was to be a treaty for

the session of Winnebago lands, they would be present to prevent it or resist any action for the civilization of the Indians. At his suggestion General Scott stated in his order, that the object in calling the Winnebagoes was that they might join in a treaty of peace as the allies of the whites. He therefore ordered General Street to come to Rock Island with his Indians and bring the prisoners he had taken also, and ordered Colonel Taylor to furnish a military escort. Colonel Taylor placed Lieutenant Jefferson Davis in command of this guard. Black Hawk had been delivered to Colonel Taylor and held for several days in the guard house of the fort till the party should be ready to start. While in custody Black Hawk had been put in irons, and was so delivered to Lieutenant Davis. When General Street went on the boat he walked around the deck taking each Indian by the hand, until he came to Black Hawk. Seeing the irons on his wrists, he turned to Lieutenant Davis and said: "Lieutenant Davis, have these irons removed." Davis suggested that it might not be safe. Then Mr. Street, facing him, said, "Sir, I hold myself personally responsible for this man's safety and good conduct." Lieutenant Davis replied, "If you direct it, General," and turning to his orderly sent for a blacksmith belonging to the boat to file them off. The irons were made from a small half round bar bent around each wrist and riveted. The iron was cutting into the flesh.

General Street knew that Black Hawk was honest in his intentions; he had not sold his land, and the men who signed the treaty, had no right to do so. He did not intend war, but was led into it by the Prophet. Black Hawk was one of the best specimens of the "Red man," the descendant of a long line of chiefs, and General Street's treatment of him while a prisoner was so considerate that Black Hawk ever after entertained the warmest friendship for him.

At Rock Island General Street left the boat, and Lieutenant Davis took Black Hawk and the Prophet to Fortress Monroe. When released he was returned to his tribe under charge of Major Garland.

In his autobiography Black Hawk says after his return from Washington:—

I called on the Agent of the Winnebagoes (General J. M. Street) to whom I had surrendered myself after the battle of Bad Ax, who received me very friendly. I told him that I had left my great medicine bag with his chiefs before I gave myself up; and now, that I was to enjoy my liberty again, I was anxious to get it, that I might hand it down to my nation unsullied. He said it was safe; he had heard his chiefs speak of it, and would get it and send it to me. I hope he will not forget his promise, as the whites generally do, because I have always heard that he was a good man, and a good father, and made no promise that he did not fulfil.

That part of the Winnebago tribe living on the upper Wisconsin and Fox rivers were represented by a delegation in charge of John H. Kinzie, the sub-agent at Ft. Winnebago, and Pierre Pauquette, interpreter, and some of his family, and the traders also accompanied them. When General Street laid before these Indians the draft of the treaty, they were taken by surprise, and made objections; but, when they found the rest of the tribe (largely in the majority) would do as General Street advised and make the treaty, they asked for personal consideration, as their village was on the land offered for sale. They asked that several sections of land be reserved for Pauquette and his family, and certain sums be paid to their traders. Whatever may have been General Street's objections, he would not incur the risk of postponing the sale of the land, so necessary to the growth of Wisconsin; and not only unnecessary but hurtful to that part of the tribe living on it. They were half surrounded by white settlements, renegades from other tribes made their home among them, and their close proximity to the border settlers was a constant menace to the peace which then

existed. Not to mention the great advantage to Wisconsin, the benefit to the Indians was beyond calculation. By the treaty they were given the "Neutral Ground," a rich tract west of the Mississippi, which General Street hoped would be their permanent home—by opening farms on the land, to be given them in severalty, building mills and school houses, which, as he said to them, would place them in more comfortable circumstances than their white neighbors. This was his plan for the use of the proceeds of the sale of their lands, instead of squandering it on half-breeds or giving it to traders who sold them "fire water" and fleeced them—thus rendering their condition as the years rolled by more degraded and hopeless, until finally they would become extinct as a nation. In a letter to the Commissioner of Indian affairs, General Street says, speaking of the fund to be used under this treaty of 1832:

This fund if rightly employed will have a deep and permanent influence upon the happiness, prosperity, and very existence of the Winnebagoes as a nation; these sums may be considered as savings from the vast sums annually engulfed by the traders and whiskey sellers, under the head of "Specie Annuities." At the mention of annuities, which in most of our Indian treaties are specially stipulated to be paid in specie, every heart that feels for the fading remnant of a once numerous race, would do well to pause and consider the cruelty of such a system of abominations directly tending to the destruction and ultimate extermination of the Indians. The present system of acquiring Indian lands is horrible in its results, revolting to every sense of justice and humanity towards poor, ignorant, dependent savages, in the hands of cunning, wily, unprincipled and unfeeling traders; the Indian land is purchased, the hunting ground circumscribed, and thousands are stipulated to be paid annually to the Indians; not in any way calculated to improve their condition, and lead them to provide for themselves by learning to cultivate the soil, but in *specie*. Does no member of Congress in legislating for these defrauding creatures wish to know the reason of this strange demand? It is the trader acting by his whiskey on the unsuspecting mind of the poor ignorant savage. And will such a government as ours, aspiring to the highest character among the governments of the world for liberality and justice to all nations, permit such an abominable system of fraud, involving certain ruin to the Indians, to exist under the sanction of their treaties with the Indians? Forbid it humanity, forbid it justice!

After the treaty of 1832 was completed General Street made out the following account:

THE UNITED STATES INDIAN DEPARTMENT,

1832.

To Jos. M. Street, Dr.

Sep. 22.	For attending with the Winnebagoes of my Agency, a council held at Rock Island with General Scott and Governor Reynolds, from the 3rd to 22d of Sept., 1832; at which a purchase of the whole Winnebago country south of Wisconsin river was made, and the Indians agreed to move west of the Mississippi—two hundred miles from my Agency,	\$250.00
	(Note which was made at a later date).	
	Amount allowed,	\$200.00
	Amount disallowed,	\$50.00

In remarks appended to the above account he says:

I have ventured to ask that this sum be awarded me to cover my expenses, and be some small compensation for my services, from the following considerations, to-wit:

The immediate agency I had in bringing the Indian war to a speedy and satisfactory conclusion by the delivering up to General Scott, the principal hostile chiefs, through my influence and extraordinary exertions: attending the Council at Rock Island at a period of the greatest mortality from the cholera, and in effectually aiding General Scott in effecting the treaty entered into with the Winnebagoes for the cession of a large portion of their country on the east, and removal of many of the Winnebagoes to the west of the Mississippi.—Services which I feel confident General Scott and Governor Reynolds will readily acknowledge. After the treaty no means of conveyance offering, I purchased for cash, a horse and saddle to ride home.

(Signed) Jos. M. STREET,

U. S. Indian Agent.

The cutting off of one-fifth of General Street's claim for extra services shows a short-sighted policy in the Indian Department, when it is known that the Indians repeatedly offered him land and money as a grateful acknowledgement of their obligations to him, and he found it necessary often to explain to them that he was paid by their Great Father and could not take money or land from them. The traders would have paid largely for his favor in overlooking irregularities in their dealings with the Indians. In 1836 Keokuk wanted him to accept a reservation of land; but on his refusal, proposed to place a sum

of money in Mr. Davenport's hands (the trader at Rock Island) for him, saying no one would be the wiser. He looked at Keokuk with a smile and said: "Do you want me to be under Mr. Davenport's thumb?"

After the treaty of September 15, 1832, as the Winnebagoes were returning from Rock Island to Prairie du Chien, their head chief, Carramanee, the lame, died of cholera. This was a great loss to the tribe and to General Street, who expected through him to carry out his plans for the civilization and education of the Winnebagoes. He was the only chief that he had been able entirely to withdraw from the influence of the traders—and in this reformed drunkard he could place implicit confidence.

In connection with the treaty of Feb. 15, 1832, there occurred a circumstance of interest in the history of Wisconsin. For some time General Street had seen that he could not settle and civilize the Winnebagoes in Wisconsin; and, in 1830, when an opportunity offered he suggested to the government the purchase of a strip forty miles wide, extending from the Mississippi to the Des Moines, half from the Sacs and Foxes, and half from the Sioux, to be held as neutral ground, and thus put a stop to the wars between those tribes. In 1832, he got the commissioners to give this land (the neutral ground) to the Winnebagoes for land in Wisconsin, thus opening a large tract for settlement, and removing the Indians from that part of the Territory. This gave quite an impetus to the growth of Wisconsin, by opening the country south and east of that river, and removing the Indians from that part of the Territory. It gave quiet to the frontier, not only by opening new lands but by avoiding any danger of trouble with the Indians.

In the treaty of September 15, 1832, the government agreed to build a school house and open a farm for the Winnebagoes. In 1833, when General Street took the portage band to their new home, he located the farm and commenced the school building, but before it was com-

pleted, the work was stopped by an order from the Indian Department, which caused the delay of a year. In 1834, General Street was transferred to the Sacs and Foxes and the school and farm made little progress for years.

The traders would have had General Street removed from office if it had not been for the steadfast friendship of General Jackson; they only prevented the carrying out of his plans for the civilization of the Indians. There is no doubt that he would have settled the Winnebagoes in permanent homes and started them on the way to civilization had he been sustained by the Indian Department. In a letter to Mr. Carr (Secretary of War) urging the adoption of his plans, he says, (Sept. 12, 1834):

Previous to my arrival at the Prairie du Chien Agency, two years had not passed together since the late war without some white man being killed by these Indians; since my appointment not one instance of killing has occurred.

The difficulties he had to surmount during the years from 1832 to 1834 were calculated to discourage a less resolute and determined man, but in his efforts to protect the Indians and advance their interests he never faltered. After his removal to Rock Island in 1835, there had been a sub-agent (Mr. Boyd) placed at Prairie du Chien, and in 1837 the Winnebagoes sold their land east of the Mississippi. By this treaty which was made to suit the traders, the Indians were to receive the price of the land in annual specie payments. There was also a sum set apart, to be paid to the traders on old debts, and to the half breeds. As this money was to be distributed among the parties entitled to it, the government sent commissioners to Prairie du Chien to designate the amounts to be paid to each person. General Simon Cameron and a Mr. Murray were sent out for that purpose. After the certificate had been issued by the Commissioners, several persons wrote to Major E. A. Hitchcock, Superintendent of Indian Affairs

at St. Louis, and to General Street, charging that fraud had been practiced in making the distribution. General Street wrote to Major Hitchcock on the subject and informed the parties at Prairie du Chien that, if they could sustain the charges, he and Major Hitchcock would get the action of the Commissioners set aside. They succeeded in having this done and a new award was made.

General Street did not wish to be changed from the Winnebago Agency at Prairie du Chien to the Sac and Fox Agency at Rock Island and made a strong appeal, which was endorsed by Colonel Richard M. Johnson, who said:

Congress was under the impression that the Sac and Fox nation could not do without an agent, and established by law the Rock Island Agency. After the adjournment, the Rock Island Agency was transferred to Green Bay, and the Sacs and Foxes attached to the Prairie du Chien Agency. This arrangement is ruinous to the Indians in this country, is calculated to stop all improvement of the Indians, throw them completely into the hands of the traders; will render them more and more miserable and dependent, and will eventuate in another Indian war. No military commanding officer however he may desire the amelioration of the Indian can devote that time to the subject, especially to schools and agriculture among them, that an agent can, and without the constant and faithful personal attention of an agent, it is entirely throwing away money to attempt to school or to teach them farming. There ought to be an agent for the Sacs and Foxes to reside on the Des Moines within their country. They are an important, warlike nation, many of their chiefs well informed, and they require a good agent, who by living among them on the Des Moines, could soon acquire a decided influence over and control them; and in a few years they might be taught to farm entirely. Now they raise a great quantity of corn without help or instruction, but are much pestered by white traders with whiskey, etc. If removed to the interior of their country and given the necessary aid and the personal attention of a capable and faithful agent, they would rapidly improve in their agriculture, gradually withdraw from the roving life of hunters, and with the acquisition of property desire security and peace. The Prairie du Chien Agency is as much as one man can possibly do justice to. The important services rendered by General Street at that agency during the Sac and Fox war, the influence he has shown he possesses over the Winnebagoes and part of the Sioux, and the steps he was taking to educate them and teach them farming, point him out as

the proper person for agent at Prairie du Chien; and his services certainly ought to induce the President to assign to him a residence and to have some regard for his personal feelings and interests. General Street, as he wishes it, ought to be stationed at Prairie du Chien, and the Sacs and Foxes made a distinct agency established on the Des Moines at the place where the Fort is placed, if any is established there, if not, at or near the Indian village on the Des Moines.

Something of the customs of the Indians may be learned from a letter written by General Street to General Wm. Clarke, Superintendent at St. Louis, August 14, 1833. He says:

Sometime past I transmitted to you an account of three Sac prisoners now with the Sioux, two young men and a little girl. The little girl was taken to Rock Island by Wabashaw, the Sioux chief, and delivered to me at that place. The Sioux chief had adopted her into his family to replace a little girl who had recently died, and desired me to ask her of General Scott, which I did, and General Scott made inquiries of the interpreter who informed him that her nearest relatives had been killed during the war. General Scott upon this gave the little girl to Wabashaw, and he took her home and treated her as his child. The two young men were adopted into families, but can return home when they please. Having acted with Colonel Z. Taylor, commanding at Fort Crawford, and obtained from the Sioux all the prisoners except these three, he called on me to make inquiries as to these. I did so; and communicated to him the above facts. Before Colonel Taylor requires these prisoners of the Sioux, I would be greatly gratified to receive instructions on the subject. To wrest the little girl from the Sioux chief after her delivery at Rock Island and the act of General Scott, would have a tendency to impair that confidence the Indians now repose in the officers of our government and possibly cause much discontent. The others might be required to be brought to this place, and when delivered to Colonel Taylor told that they might do as they pleased; give them liberty to go home to the Sacs and Foxes or return to the Sioux, and let them make their selection and act accordingly. Be pleased to answer this as early as convenient, as Colonel Taylor wishes to make the requisition as soon as I can receive your instructions.

Observe how readily any commendable trait in the Indian is recognized and respected and with what care the honor of our government is guarded and their respect for it cultivated.

In 1835, General Street removed his family to Rock

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Island, where he resided until the autumn of 1837, when he returned to Prairie du Chien at his own request and at very considerable personal sacrifice, on account of his desire to place the Winnebago school and farm on a permanent footing. The Superintendent, Rev. David Lowry, had complained that they were not prospering on account of the opposition of the traders and lack of proper care on the part of the government in carrying out the stipulations of the treaty of 1832. In 1838 he selected the site for the new Sac and Fox Agency on the Des Moines and let contracts for the necessary buildings. In the spring of 1839, he removed his family to the new Agency, and, as it was so far from Prairie du Chien, he gave up all supervision of the Winnebagoes.

In October, 1837, General Street took a deputation of Sacs and Foxes to Washington, consisting of Keokuk, Appanoose, Poweshiek, Wapello, Black Hawk and Kishke-kosh. There may have been others. On the trip they were at one time on a boat commanded by Captain West (afterwards of Des Moines) and were so well treated by him that General Street recommended other Indian deputations, who were behind, to take Captain West's boat. At one of the transfers a line of coaches stood beside the platform, Black Hawk was in one of them and in the next one back Keokuk, and in front of him Mr. A. Le Claire. The people ask for Black Hawk; Keokuk pointed forward, and, as Le Claire was in front, he was mistaken for Black Hawk, and thus Keokuk's quick wit gave the impression that Black Hawk was a fat man of over 300 pounds weight. In New York no attention was shown the party, and when they walked out to look at the city they were so crowded that General Street led them through a store into an alley and thus back to the hotel. In Boston they were entertained by the Mayor and Governor Everett, and Keokuk was presented with a silver

medal.* They were taken around the city in open carriages and gave a war dance on Boston Common. The impression left on the minds of the Indians was that Boston was the finest and largest city in the United States. At the treaty made at this time they sold a strip of land west of the Black Hawk purchase (in 1832) twenty-five miles wide at Iowa City and narrower at the north and south terminus. Before the lines were run on the Des Moines river some settlers got over the line, among whom was Mr. Van Caldwell. When the order was issued for the removal of the intruders General Street appointed Mr. Caldwell to keep a ferry over the Des Moines river for the convenience of the government employees in going to the mill built for the Indians on Soap Creek. Mr. Caldwell was probably as well known as any of the early settlers in that region. He was a Virginia gentleman of the old school and a warm personal friend of the most prominent men of Iowa of his day. His son, Henry Clay Caldwell, is now one of the judges of the United States Circuit Court.

Of the early settlers General Street numbered among his friends Captain Jesse B. Brown, Messrs. William and John Graham of Keokuk, (whom he had known before they came to Iowa), General A. C. Dodge, General V. P. Van Antwerp, Messrs. Grimes and Star who were his legal advisers, and J. A. Edwards who was publishing *The Union Patriot* at Jacksonville, Illinois, when he first met him. Mr. Edwards came to Ft. Madison and afterwards settled in Burlington, where he established *The Burlington Hawkeye*.

* This medal was found in a ploughed field in one of our southern counties, twenty or more years afterward. The man who found it cut a strip about an inch wide from the lower side of the medal, from which to make a sight for his rifle! He then sold it to one of the early jewellers of Des Moines—in whose possession I saw it—for old silver. It was very smooth, thickest in the center, sloping to a thin edge, and bore this inscription: "The City of Boston, to Keokuk, Chief of the Sacs and Foxes." I believe it also bore the date, "1837." Years afterward I made an effort to trace and secure this medal for the State, but without success.—EDITOR OF THE ANNALS.

Iowa had been more fortunate than any of the States, up to that time, in having no Indian wars and much of the credit of this peaceful condition may be given to General Street. His influence over the Indians from 1827 to 1839 and his intercourse with the white settlers, were constantly used to secure and preserve peace. During those years there were often occurrences that would have led to bloodshed had it not been for his efforts. The Winnebagoes were with the British in the war of 1812 and there was some feeling of hostility among them up to 1827. A part of the Sacs and Foxes were also called "The British Band." He brought both these tribes to a feeling of warm friendship for the people and the government of the United States.

General Street had obtained, by treaty stipulations, the setting aside a portion of the annuity paid to the Sacs and Foxes, to be expended in aid of their advancement in the arts of civilization. During the year 1839 he proposed to the tribe to sell a portion of their land and apply the proceeds to the improvement of a small portion on the Des Moines river, which he advised them to select for their permanent home, to be allotted in severalty. But his failing health prevented the carrying out of these plans. He was taken sick in November, 1839, and lingered until May 5, 1840. When the Indians heard of his death they came to the Agency and requested the family to bury him in their country, saying they would give his widow a section of land to include the grave, and a half section to each of his children. But finding the government opposed to this, the Indians were determined not to sell the land on which the grave was located. That section was reserved for Mrs. Street by the treaty of 1842.

General Street's plan was the allotment of the Indian lands to them in severalty, and as soon as practicable make them citizens of the United States. This is the plan now adopted by the government. He gained great influ-

ence over the Indians with whom he was associated, and his management and control of the intercourse between them and the whites was such as to insure peaceful relations. Previous to his going among the Indians there had been constant trouble in Illinois and Wisconsin, but during his time there was never any trouble with the Indians of his Agency, and the settlers of Wisconsin had no Indian wars. General Street refers to this fact in his letter to the Secretary of War.

One of his many communications to the Indian Department closes with these words: "Teach him agriculture and his family domestic economy, give him by experience right notions of individual property, and the plan of civilizing the Indian commences with the A, B, C, of civilization."

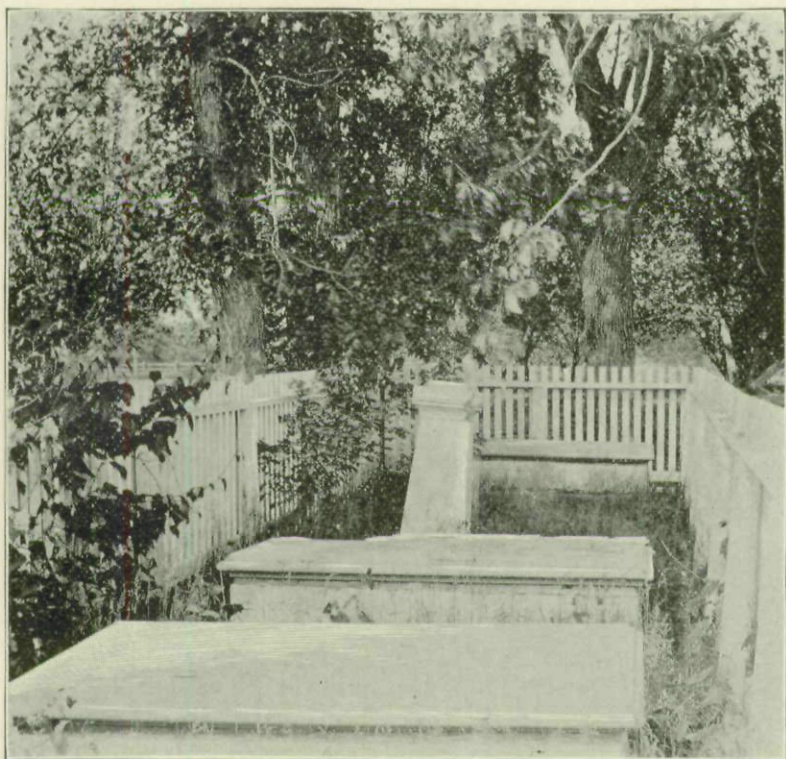
General Street's private and public life show him to have been one of the best of men. He was an affectionate husband and father, a sincere friend and a devoted Christian. All who knew him respected him and his family and friends loved him. Had he been permitted to carry out his plans for the management of the Indians, many of them would now be civilized and settled in Iowa and Minnesota. Within the last few years some of his plans are being adopted. He obtained the first appropriation for farms, mills, and schools, recommending the allotment of lands in severalty, the abolition of tribal relations, and their admission to citizenship.

General Street lingered through the winter of 1839-40 at the Sac and Fox Agency, near the Des Moines river, Iowa, not far from the place where since has been built the city of Ottumwa. Dr. Enos Lowe of Burlington, afterwards one of the founders of Omaha, and Dr. Volney Spaulding of Ft. Madison, attended him, coming a distance of seventy-five miles, there being no physician nearer. As soon as he could be summoned, his brother-in-law, Dr. Posey, of Shawneetown, Ill., came to his assis-

tance, and was in constant attendance until his death. His disease, which was paralysis, was attended with aphasia, and he had much difficulty in expressing himself, but his mind was clear and his faith bright. A short time before the end he called his family together and spoke of his probable death with his customary fearlessness, and charged them to meet him in heaven.

The affairs of his Agency were attended to by his sons, and the Indian Department was apprised of his illness. The course of the Department is another evidence of the stronghold his long and faithful services had given him with the government. The President offered, if his illness should permanently unfit him for the duties of the Agency, to appoint any of his sons or sons-in-law whom he would recommend. And after his death the President did appoint one of his sons-in-law, Major John Beach, to succeed him.

A life-long friend, the Rev. John Cameron, of the Cumberland Presbyterian church, preached his funeral sermon, and he was followed to the grave by the Indians whom he had loved, and for whom he had labored with disinterested zeal, and who had in return given him in full measure respect, love, and trust. Does any one want proof of the true nobility of the Indian character? Let him go to the home of this Agent when he lay in his winding sheet. Keokuk and other chiefs stood around the body of their friend, when after short speeches, in which they eulogized him in such terms as would have done honor to the best on earth, they asked that he might be buried in their country. They wished, as above stated, to give the widow a section of land to include the spot where his body might be laid, and a half a section to each of his twelve children. Keokuk said this promise was in the name of the whole tribe, and if but one Indian was left when the land was sold, that one would see that the promise to the dead was faithfully kept.



OLD GRAVES AT AGENCY CITY, IOWA.

The pillar marks that of Gen. J. M. Street; those in the foreground were members of his family; that of the Indian Chief Wapello is next to the picket fence in the back-ground.

In many ways these Indians gave evidence that he still lived in their memories. One instance is worthy of mention. Wapello, one of the chiefs, and at his own request, was brought by the Indians many miles from his camp to be buried at the side of his "father and friend."

The text of his funeral discourse is a fitting conclusion of a life lived in the fear of God and fearless of man: "Say ye to the righteous that it shall be well with him: for they shall eat the fruit of their doings." Isaiah 3. 10.

MAJOR-GENERAL JOHN M. CORSE.

IN THE CAMPAIGNS OF 1864.—1. IN THE RED RIVER EXPEDITION. 2. IN THE ATLANTA CAMPAIGN. 3. AT ROME, GEORGIA, AND IN THE DEFENSE OF ALLATOONA. 4. IN THE MARCH TO THE SEA, AND THE CAPTURE OF SAVANNAH.

BY REV. DR. WILLIAM SALTER.

Upon recovering in a measure from his wounds received at Tunnei Hill on Missionary Ridge, General Corse was assigned to the command for a few weeks of the rendezvous for drafted men at Springfield, Ill., and on the 29th of February was ordered to report to General Sherman. Meantime General Grant, understanding that more brigadier-generals had been appointed than could be confirmed by the Senate, submitted to General Halleck a new list of recommendations, giving names in the order of his preference, taking into consideration services rendered and fitness for the position. He was personally acquaint-

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